CYCLING AND WALKING: a Scottish Government 2012-13 disaster

The Scottish Government draft 2012-13 budget, now being consulted on, is a disaster for walking and cycling. Total transport spending rises from £1804m in 2011-12 to £1884m in 2012-13, thanks to a near £100m boost for trunk roads and motorways from £558m to £655m. In contrast to that huge and growing total, the meagre sums devoted to active travel are being slashed.

WHY FUND WALKING/CYCLING?
... the government already knows why!!
- It was government who set a 2020 target of 10% of trips by bike [Cycling Action Plan for Scotland].
- Government knows the emissions reasons - they included the 10% cycle target as a milestone towards statutory emissions targets in Low Carbon Scotland.
- Government knows the public health and obesity reasons - they included the 10% cycle target in the national strategy to combat obesity.
- Admittedly they haven't bothered to study the employment reasons; yet cycle projects are much more effective than trunk road projects in jobs terms.

The equivalent of one small/medium £10-£20m trunk road upgrade in one small part of Scotland would fund multiple cycle projects in every Scottish local authority, meaning safe and welcoming active-travel infrastructure for everyday work, shopping, leisure and school trips for many thousands of people – not to mention the extra construction and maintenance jobs compared to roads.

CYCLING WALKING SAFER STREETS
One of the 2 main active travel funding streams is CWSS, allocated to local authorities on a per-capita basis. The budget leaves CWSS for discussion with COSLA, with a final decision in early December.

CWSS is the basic building block in assembling local active travel infrastructure/promotion budgets. Council officers are now adept at using it to secure additional matched funds from outside bodies like Sustrans, Europe, trusts, and others. Its loss would devastate local active travel provision.

Please ask COSLA & MSPs to retain CWSS

WHAT COUNCIL OFFICERS TOLD US
"CWSS/Sustrans grants are vital for cycle project delivery” ... “Without ring-fenced funds it is unlikely government targets will be hit” ... “Reduction in Sustrans funds appears contrary to the government's own aims” ... “CWSS facilitates match funding” ... “Direct cycle/walk funding is of utmost importance.”


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